

## **L&PS New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety**

Division of Gaming Enforcement

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Attorney General Releases Report on Boxing Regulation;  
Files Complaints Against Promoters Involved in IBF Payoffs

EAST NEWARK -- Attorney General John J. Farmer, Jr. and Division of Gaming Enforcement (DGE) Director John Peter Suarez today released a report that outlines a number of changes to improve the regulation of boxing in New Jersey, assure the safety of participants and the integrity of events. The Attorney General also announced that licensing action is being taken against two boxing promoters, who have admitted they made payoffs to officials of the International Boxing Federation (IBF).

"We are committed to assuring that boxing in New Jersey is regulated in a manner that assures the safety of the participants and the integrity of the industry," the Attorney General said. "The thorough review and evaluation of the licensing process embodied in this report demonstrates our dedication to making the reforms necessary to achieve that goal."

The Attorney General made today's announcement at the Red Brick Gym in East Newark, one of the largest training facilities for amateur boxers in the state. Farmer noted that the proposed recommendations for regulatory reforms were intended to protect boxers like those who emerge into the professional ranks from community gyms such as Red Brick.

The recommendations for regulatory changes for boxing are set forth in the DGE's Report to the Attorney General on the State Athletic Control Board, a report that sets its recommendations against a thorough review of the structure and organization of the State Athletic Control Board (SACB). Farmer said he will work with the DGE and Larry Hazzard, Sr., Commissioner of the SACB, to implement the proposed changes. The SACB is the state agency with the authority to adopt regulations for the boxing industry.

DGE Director Suarez said that the changes recommended in the report are intended to ensure the legitimacy of the boxing industry. To do that, the DGE recommends that the SACB tighten its licensing protocol to better assess the character and health of those

involved in the sport. This can be accomplished primarily by beginning the licensing process further in advance of an event to reduce the amount of work that needs to be done immediately prior to the event. This would allow the SACB and its commissioner time to thoroughly evaluate the character and health issues upon which licensure depends. In order to be granted a license by the SACB, promoters, managers, seconds and boxers must establish their good character, honesty, integrity and responsibility.

Suarez said a regulatory proposal outlined in the division's report would require that a boxer convicted of a first degree offense and certain second degree offenses within the past five years must demonstrate his or her rehabilitation in order to be granted a license by the SACB. The name, date of birth, and social security number of boxers would have to be submitted at least one week prior to a bout to allow time for a criminal history check and, if negative information is found, allow time for a boxer to demonstrate rehabilitation to the board and provide time for the board to consider and evaluate the information presented. The division also recommends that a boxer history also be submitted one week prior to the event because such histories provide information on knockouts, technical knockouts, disclose any current medical suspensions and assist in the evaluation of whether a match is competitive.

Suarez added that although safety standards have been raised in recent years throughout the country, the SACB's ability to assure boxer health and safety can be improved by strictly adhering to medical requirements and strengthening communication among athletic agencies. This will help to assure that only those boxers who have satisfied all medical testing requirements are permitted to compete. Other recommended changes include rewriting the boxer's license application, and requiring the boxer and manager to certify that the boxer is not under suspension in any other jurisdiction and requiring that all medical test results be submitted no less than 48 hours before a fight.

"Boxing is a dangerous sport by nature, but by upholding a licensing framework that includes strict medical requirements, giving boxers and their managers greater accountability for boxer safety and by distributing the pre-event regulatory work throughout the week of an event, we can assure that the system does what is supposed to do: allow for safe, legitimate boxing contests to take place in New Jersey," Suarez said.

### Licensing Action

Suarez said that the integrity of the boxing industry has been called into question in recent months as a federal trial in New Jersey revealed that a number of boxing promoters had paid bribes to the International Boxing Federation (IBF), a sanctioning organization whose president was convicted last month of money laundering, tax evasion and interstate travel to aid racketeering. The DGE today filed complaints against two licensed promoters, who have admitted paying bribes to the IBF.

Based on admitted conduct by Robert Arum and Top Rank Inc., the DGE filed a complaint with the Casino Control Commission (CCC), which asks the CCC to find Top Rank, Inc. and Robert Arum disqualified from licensure as a Casino Service Industry for

having committed acts which constitute the New Jersey offense of Commercial Bribery, Conspiracy to Commit Commercial Bribery and Misconduct by a Corporate Official. The division also seeks revocation of the Casino Service Industry license of Top Rank, Inc. based upon admitted disqualifying conduct.

Similarly, based on admitted conduct by Cedric Kushner, the Division filed a complaint with the CCC which asks the CCC to find Cedric Kushner and/or Cedric Kushner Promotions, Ltd. disqualified for having committed acts which constitute the New Jersey offense of Commercial Bribery, Conspiracy to Commit Commercial Bribery and Misconduct by a Corporate Official. Further, the Division asks that the Casino Service Industry license of Cedric Kushner Promotions, Ltd. be revoked and the pending renewal application be denied. Kushner and Arum have 15 days to respond to the complaints and request a hearing before the CCC.

Additionally, the Division filed motions for a CCC order temporarily prohibiting all casinos from transacting business, directly or indirectly, with Top Rank, Inc. and/or Robert Arum and Cedric Kushner Promotions, Ltd. and/or Cedric Kushner. The Division has requested these motions be heard at the November 1, 2000, Casino Control Commission Hearing.

Suarez added that the DGE is writing to the State Athletic Control Board members to inform them of the complaints filed today for their consideration when reviewing Arum and Kushner's applications for SACB promoters' licenses. SACB licenses expire annually, so those who wish to be re-licensed must reapply each year.

"The changes recommended in this report and the complaints filed today by the Division of Gaming Enforcement will help to re-establish the public's trust and confidence in the boxing industry in New Jersey," Attorney General Farmer said.

As part of the boxing reform effort, the DGE also conducted a complete review of the events surrounding the death of boxer Stephan Johnson in Atlantic City in November of 1999. This review revealed that while a number of safeguards are in place, reforms are needed to ensure that both the application itself and licensing procedures are more effective in evaluating an applicant's fitness for a license.

"Mr. Johnson's death was indeed a tragedy. New Jersey and the SACB have long been leaders in ensuring boxer safety and health, but we can do even more to protect those who compete in this sport," Suarez said. "We believe that the reforms outlined today will help to improve the process and raise the safety standard for all participants in New Jersey and throughout the boxing industry."

SACB Commissioner Larry Hazzard, Sr. said that the SACB has already made improvements to the licensing process including: requesting that medical testing results be submitted at least 48 hours before a bout, implementing a standard procedure by which all medical test reports upon receipt are forwarded immediately to the chairman of the Medical Advisory Council for review, and requiring boxers to answer a number of

questions about medical and other suspensions, knockouts and other medical conditions and requiring the boxer and manager to certify the accuracy of that information.

"The recommendations put forth in the division's report will help guide us as we move forward and continue to raise the bar for boxer safety and health," Commissioner Hazzard said. "I am proud of the procedural improvements we have already made to receive medical testing reports earlier in the licensing process and provide doctors all relevant information about a boxer's history to use in their evaluation."

The report is available on the Division of Gaming Enforcement web page at [www.njdge.org](http://www.njdge.org).

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